

REPORT 351.6
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1882

OF THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM
ASSOCIATION

READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 4, 1882

NEW YORK
PUBLISHED FOR THE
CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM ASSOCIATION

BY
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

1882

The Civil-Service Reform Association.

Publications and Documents now ready (May, 1882).

PUBLICATIONS.

- I. **Purposes of the Civil-Service Reform Association**, including its constitution. Per copy, 10 cts. Per 100, . . . \$2 75
- II. **The Beginning of the Spoils System in the National Government, 1829-30.** (Reprinted, by permission, from Parton's "Life of Andrew Jackson.") Per copy, 10 cts. Per 100, . . . \$3 00
- III. **The Spoils System and Civil-Service Reform in the Custom-House and Post-Office at New York.** By DORMAN B. EATON. 136 pages, 8vo. Per copy, 25 cts. Per 100, . . . \$15 00
- IV. **Civil-Service Reform in the New York Custom-House.** By WILLARD BROWN. Per copy, 5 cts. Per 100, . . . \$3 00
- V. **Term and Tenure of Office.** By DORMAN B. EATON. 108 pages, 8vo. Per copy, 25 cts. Per 100, . . . \$15 00
- VI. **Documents relating to the Removal from Office and Indictment of General N. M. Curtis for Levying and Receiving Political Assessments.** Per copy, 10 cts.

The Operation of the Civil-Service Rules in the N. Y. Custom-House: Report, made to the Senate, in March, 1881, by the Secretary of the Treasury. Per copy, 5 cts. Per 100, . . . \$2 25

Regulation and Improvement of the Civil Service: Report made in February, 1881, by the Select Committee of U. S. Senate (Geo. H. Pendleton, Chairman). Per copy, 5 cts. Per 100, . . . \$2 50

Civil-Service Reform; a condensed statement for general distribution. Per 1,000, . . . \$3 00

Extract from Posmaster-General's Report. Per 100, . . . 40c.

Extract from President Arthur's Report. Per 100, . . . 25c

Constitution of the Civil-Service Reform Association, with list of officers. Per 100, . . . 50

By-laws of same. Per 100, . . . 50

Petitions to Congress for Civil-Service Reform. Per 100, . . . 75

IN PREPARATION.

A History of the Spoils System. By GEO. WM. CURTIS.

The Effect of the Spoils System on Party Nominations. By HORACE WHITE.

Political Assessments. By A. R. MACDONOUGH.

The Objection to the Reform that it would produce an Aristocracy of Office-Holders. By E. L. GODKIN.

Other publications will follow.

[Donations for the general purposes of the Association are requested. Checks should be drawn to order of John C. Enc, Treasurer, and addressed to William Potts, Secretary, 44 Pine Street, New York City.]

Orders for the publications will be filled by WILLIAM POTTS, Secretary, 4 Pine Street, N. Y., or by

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, PUBLISHERS FOR THE SOCIETY,
27 and 29 West Twenty-Third Street, New York.

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REPORT
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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
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CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM ASSOCIATION

READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 4, 1882.

IN presenting their second annual report the members of the Executive Committee are fortunate in being able to congratulate their fellows of the Association upon substantial progress made during the year. They feel well pleased, that this progress has been much greater than at the beginning they had any reason to expect.

The year has been one of peculiar excitement, and wide and earnest attention has been drawn to the cause. Experience has shown, however, that all causes which rely upon the action of popular bodies have their periods of flow and ebb, and that rarely is a great work accomplished except by successive steps, often separated by considerable periods of apparent stagnation, if not worse. No thoughtful and observant supporter of this movement will be surprised, therefore, if, for a time, it should seem to cease, or even give place to a retrograde one, so far at least as administrative action goes. An Association like ours has two distinct functions: the one to furnish information and argument when they may be effectively used; the other to hold, during periods of stagnation, the ground which may have been gained during periods of enthusiasm. The assault made on the late President awakened a feeling throughout the country which opened the public mind to a realization of the abuses of the spoils system. Many were convinced who might not otherwise have been reached, and many who

had no sympathy with our cause were forced by personal interest to simulate a feeling which they did not possess. The period of enthusiasm having passed, and other questions having attracted attention, it was to be expected that those who for a time fell in with the drift of popular sentiment should repudiate the views which they seemed to have adopted, and resume their hostile attitude. Should such a change make itself felt in political addresses and in the daily press, it would in no wise reveal an actual reversal of the movement, which, as we know, is making steady headway among intelligent citizens from day to day, but rather, as final success and the permanence of a good system must depend upon a foundation of knowledge and a settled determination on the part of the people at large, the movement will gain strength and vigor from the obstacles which it is forced to overcome.

The following officers were elected for the past year :

PRESIDENT.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

BENJAMIN H. BRISTOW,
HOWARD POTTER,
ROSWELL D. HITCHCOCK,
OSWALD OTTENDORFER,

GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN,
JOHN JAY,
ROBERT B. MINTURN,
GEORGE B. BUTLER.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

EVERETT P. WHEELER,
HENRY W. BELLOWES,
SILAS W. BURT,
EDWARD CARY,
CHARLES COLLINS,
ELIAL F. HALL,
CHARLES D. INGERSOLL,

CHARLES H. MARSHALL,
GEORGE HAVEN PUTNAM,
WILLIAM CARY SANGER,
ANSON PHELPS STOKES,
HENRY STONE,
WILLIAM H. THOMSON,
FREDERICK W. WHITRIDGE.

TREASURER.

JOHN C. ENO.

SECRETARY.

WILLIAM POTTS.

The Hon. Carl Schurz was appointed upon the Publication Committee in the place of Mr. Potts, elected Secretary, and subsequently, on the first of February, Willard Brown was elected Assistant Secretary.

The Rev. Dr. Bellows, the first President of the Association, and always the advocate of the cause for which it stands, died during the year, and Mr. Marshall presented his resignation. One of the vacancies thus caused was subsequently filled by the appointment of Mr. Brown.

At the beginning of the year the number of names upon the roll was 583—it is now 1,232.

Through the kindness of Col. James Burt, the Committee acquired a temporary office at No. 44 Pine Street, which was occupied for a number of months, until the increase in its business seemed to require larger accommodations. In March last an independent office was rented at No. 4 Pine Street.

The year has been marked by violent factional struggles, turning mainly upon the question of the possession of the spoils of office. At its beginning the United States Senate was the scene of a humiliating party contest over the choice of officers, which was followed by an equally humiliating contest over the confirmation of an appointee to the position of Collector of Customs at the port of New York. In New York a struggle was going on between citizens and the party politicians concerning the cleaning of the streets of the metropolis. The contest in the Senate was succeeded by a long contest in this State over the choice of Senators in the place of those who had resigned their seats because of their inability to control appointments, which contest resulted, under public pressure, in the rejection of those who had previously held the positions; and it is worthy of note that one of the gentlemen then elected, the Hon. Warner Miller, writes to this Association that he is in thorough sympathy with its aims, and will do all that he can to further them.

The contest over the street-cleaning question resulted in the passage of a bill, which was not that desired by the citizens, but which has certainly produced an improvement in

the condition of the streets of our city. The Committee took advantage of the interest shown in this agitation, to circulate among those engaged in it a statement of the purposes of the Association, and thus obtained some valuable adherents.

During the electoral campaign in the autumn, letters were addressed to the gentlemen nominated in this city to fill Congressional vacancies, asking an expression of their views in regard to the reform of the Civil Service. A reply was received from only one of the candidates, Mr. R. P. Flower. This was in the main in accordance with the views held by the Association, and the Secretary's letter and the reply having been published in the daily papers, the candidate, though a Democrat, was elected by a considerable majority in a Republican district. How much effect the correspondence may have had in producing this result, it is of course impossible to say, but it is safe to conclude that a candidate who hesitates to publicly put himself upon record as in favor of reform will thereby awaken the distrust of those who care more for good government than for party success.

At a later date letters having a like tenor were addressed to the various candidates for the Speakership of the House of Representatives. A reply was received from only one of these candidates, the Hon. S. S. Cox. This reply was also in the main favorable.

The bill for the appointment of a Civil-Service Commission, and also the bill relative to political assessments, which had been prepared by the Committee, and which had been introduced into Congress during the session of 1880-81, have been again introduced, with some amendments, during the present session. The special committee of the Senate, having given repeated hearings to gentlemen interested in the cause, has finally reported favorably the bill for the appointment of a commission. Other bills in favor of certain methods of competitive examination have been introduced, in the Senate by Mr. Dawes and in the house by Mr. Chalmers, and still others—more or less in the interest of the cause—are projected. This Committee, while desir-

ous of avoiding the assumption of any attitude which might tend to estrange the friends of reform, and while ready to welcome any result which may indicate progress, however slight, has thought it proper to state to Congress as clearly as possible why, in the view of its members, certain provisions are essential to great and permanent success.

The Hon. Erastus Brooks, at the instance of the Committee, has introduced into the State Legislature a bill prohibiting political assessments upon municipal and State officers. A bill has also been introduced into the Legislature by the Hon. M. P. Breen, providing for the appointment of teachers in the public schools on competitive examination.

In municipal affairs the most important movements which we have to record have been made in Philadelphia and in Brooklyn. The experiment of local government upon business principles is being tried under especially favorable circumstances in the latter city. No positive regulations as to methods of appointment have yet been made in either case, the efforts hitherto being simply tentative and with a desire to ascertain in what way city administration can be most carefully guarded.

The abuse of political assessments upon office-holders having received very significant illustration during the last election, and ample evidence having come into the possession of the Committee, it was thought proper that an effort should be made to demonstrate the liability assumed by federal officers under the Statute of 1876 in levying contributions. Gen. N. M. Curtis being an employé of the Treasury Department, and, at the same time, Treasurer of the Republican State Committee, and having, as a member of that committee, levied and received such assessments, his case was selected, and a statement of it was laid before the Secretary of the Treasury. In reply, the Secretary notified the Committee that the engagement of General Curtis would be terminated on the 28th of February, and that the matter of a legal investigation had been referred to District Attorney Woodford. The Committee, through its counsel, Messrs. Everett P. Wheeler and Frederick W. Whitridge,

immediately offered its assistance to the District Attorney, and, after certain correspondence and the examination of witnesses, the Grand Jury found a true bill. The indictment, however, was subsequently quashed on the ground of misnomer. The District Attorney has made a statement of the manner in which the misnomer occurred, which statement has been published in the daily papers and is probably familiar to members of the Association. He having subsequently informed the Committee that it was not the custom of his office in such cases to take further action except as a consequence of further complaint, even though the error should have arisen from negligence on the part of one of his own clerks, the Committee has made such a complaint, which the District Attorney has acknowledged, promising to lay the same before the Grand Jury in regular course.

The great interest in the question of appointments to office excited by the attack upon the President on the second of July called for prompt action by this Association, and through its Secretary an offer of its publications and of information in regard to the cause was made to all periodicals (more than ten thousand in number) within the limits of the United States. Not far from two thousand responses were received to this offer, and our publications were sent to all the journals requesting them. This distribution was followed by an active discussion through the columns of the press, which contributed much to fix attention upon the subject. And in this connection it is proper to say that the cause has been greatly promoted by the intelligent advocacy of a number of leading journals, and in the view of the Committee it is most important to give all possible assistance to such periodicals as may consent to lend their columns to the work.

A circular calling for the presentation at public meetings of resolutions referring to the spoils system as the animating cause of the assault was prepared, to which were appended the signatures of thirty-five prominent gentlemen. This circular was lithographed in fac-simile and widely distributed, and this also was followed by good results.

The Committee has published, during the year, three pamphlets in its regular series, as follows :

No. 4. "*Civil-Service Reform in the New York Custom-House*," by Willard Brown. This is a lucid statement of actual experience in the Custom-House in the execution of the rules under President Hayes' executive order, and it has been well received as conveying information widely needed.

No. 5. "*Term and Tenure of Office*," by Dorman B. Eaton. This comprises communications by Mr. Eaton to the columns of the *Penn Monthly Magazine*, with additional matter subsequently furnished to the Association, and is a very full and elaborate discussion of the subject indicated by its title, with a special intent to refute the arguments adduced in favor of brief terms of appointment to executive office.

No. 6. "*Documents relating to the removal from office and indictment of Gen. N. M. Curtis, for levying and receiving political assessments*." This is a copy of the original complaint made by the Association, and of the correspondence between it and the Secretary of the Treasury, the District Attorney, and others.

In addition to these pamphlets it has published several tracts of from one to four pages, and has procured from the public printer five thousand copies of a speech made in the Senate by Mr. Pendleton during the present session. It has also procured from the printer of the minutes of the Episcopal Church Congress held in Providence in the autumn, two thousand copies of the report of the proceedings of the session devoted to the hearing and discussion of papers upon the subject of Civil-Service Reform. It has also printed one thousand copies of the bill before Congress relative to political assessments.

The following table shows approximately the number of the various documents on hand at the beginning of the year, the number printed or purchased during the year, the number distributed, and the number remaining on hand at this date. It was hoped at the outset of our work that we should be able to sell a considerable number of copies of

our various publications. In this hope we have been in a measure disappointed; the number of copies sold, excepting to Associations, having been small as compared with the number distributed gratuitously.

	On hand May 1, 1881.	Printed or bought since May 1, 1881.	Distributed.	Remain'g on hand May 1, 1882.
Pamphlet No. 1, Purposes	1,250	8,000	8,813	437
“ “ 2, The Spoils System	2,500	8,250	10,073	677
“ “ 3, Eaton's Report		2,950	2,950	
“ “ 4, C.-S. R., N. Y. Custom House		8,200	7,327	873
“ “ 5, Term and Tenure of Office		1,000	217	783
“ “ 6, Gen'l Curtis Documents		4,000	3,948	52
Report of the Executive Committee, May, 1881		750	730	20
Garfield Memorial Broadside		127,000	126,312	688
Bill on Political Assessments		1,000	966	34
Tracts, Garfield on Civil-Service Reform		5,000	4,995	5
“ Civil-Service Reform		31,500	31,100	400
Ext. fr. Postmaster-General's Report		6,000	4,600	1,400
“ “ Prest. Arthur's Message		5,000	3,694	1,306
Civil Service Record		3,555	3,555	
Minutes of Church Congress		2,000	1,896	104
Secretary Sherman's Report	8,650		5,765	2,885
Pendleton's Report with Bill	10,620		8,795	1,825
Pendleton's Speech		5,000	4,908	92

From this table it will appear that we have distributed since our last annual meeting more than two hundred and thirty thousand documents.

In addition to these various publications the Committee has distributed numerous circulars and many thousand blank forms of a petition to Congress for the passage of a bill for the establishment of a Civil-Service Commission; which petitions have been largely signed throughout the country and subsequently presented in the United States Senate, where they have produced, as we are informed, a

marked effect. The petitions signed in and forwarded from New York contained about twelve thousand signatures, and among them those of a very large number of leading citizens of all professions and occupations.

There has been but one general meeting of the Association during the year. This was held on the 26th of January, and was devoted to the discussion of the question of political assessments. The attendance was small, but a lively interest was manifested in the subject under consideration.

The Treasurer's statement submitted herewith will show the condition of our finances. From this statement it will be learned that during the year the very generous contribution of two thousand dollars was received from one member of the Association, Mr. Orlando B. Potter, in addition to other sums given by him, to be expended "in publishing for circulation, in form suited to the occasion, the late President's opinions and utterances upon the importance and necessity of reform in the civil service of the country, with such facts in connection with his death as now emphasize and enforce them." The Treasurer has also received five hundred dollars from Mr. D. Willis James, and from other gentlemen various sums ranging downward from two hundred and fifty dollars. These contributions have enabled the Committee to extend its work largely beyond that which would have been possible had it been compelled to rely simply upon the annual dues. It is hoped that the favor thus shown will be continued and even extended, since the need of money is great, and the amount of work which can be accomplished is practically only limited by the extent of our resources.

In the course of the year it was found expedient to so change the Constitution and By-laws of the Association as to make the officers and members of the various standing committees *ex-officio* members of the Executive Committee. Under the Constitution it is necessary that amendments to the same shall be approved by the Association; these amendments are, therefore, now submitted for your consideration.

The question of organizing local associations throughout

the State of New York is one which has occupied the attention of the Committee, and to which it has given some labor, but hitherto without all the favorable results which had been anticipated. A vigorous society has been formed in Buffalo, and good meetings have been held in Auburn and Albany, with promise of early action by the citizens of those places. The members of the Committee feel that this work should be further prosecuted, and that it is exceedingly important that we should be able, at an early day, to show active organizations in all the leading cities of the State.

As a result of correspondence between representatives of the Boston and Cambridge Associations and this Association, a conference of the friends of the cause was called, to be held at Newport, Rhode Island, on the 11th of August last. The response to this call was exceedingly gratifying; the attendance at the conference was large; the discussions were marked by great unanimity and determination. The deliberations resulted, through subsequent Committee meetings, in the adoption of a Constitution and the organization of a National League, representing the various Associations throughout the country, under the presidency of Mr. Curtis, and having its headquarters in the city of New York. Up to this date the following thirty-one Associations have been announced, viz.: New York, Brooklyn, and Buffalo, in New York; Boston, Cambridge, Springfield, Northampton, West Newton, Quincy, and Malden, in Massachusetts; Providence, in Rhode Island; Connecticut (State), Hartford, New Haven, and Willimantic, in Connecticut; Morristown and Orange, in New Jersey; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, in Pennsylvania; Maryland (State); Cincinnati and Cleveland, in Ohio; Ann Arbor, in Michigan; Chicago, in Illinois; Milwaukee and Madison, in Wisconsin; Louisville, in Kentucky; Missouri (State); New Orleans, in Louisiana; Lawrence in Kansas; and San Francisco, in California. These have not all, as yet, formally connected themselves with the League, but they are all in entire harmony, and all are expected to do so. It is believed that the League will do much toward promoting the distribution of information and guiding the action of local bodies to a common end.

And now it remains only to say that our experience in the past has but intensified our determination to prosecute the work to complete success, and confirmed in us the impression that such success is absolutely sure, and will be attained at an earlier period than a year ago we had reason to anticipate.

Respectfully submitted,

EVERETT P. WHEELER,

Chairman.

WILLIAM POTTS,

Secretary.

Cr.

JNO. C. ENO, TREASURER, IN ACCOUNT WITH CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM ASSOCIATION.

Dr.

1881.	To Cash, balance on hand	\$983 35	By Cash, for postage, stationery, and office expenses	\$2,338 21
May 5.	" Annual dues	1,590 00	" Salary of Secretary to May 1, 1882	986 54
"	" Subscriptions	4,727 51	" " Assistant Secretary to April 10, 1882	450 00
"	Received for documents and publications		" Rent	150 00
"	of the Association		" Davis & Corson lithographers	159 00
"	Balance from "Hugh Gardner Fund"	715 97	" G. P. Putnam's Sons, for printing	1,704 52
"	Balance from "Potter-Garfield Fund"	63 75	" Other bills for printing	566 30
		96 63	" Expenses of Committee to Washington	54 97
			" " on Affiliated Societies	42 00
			" Assessment paid to National Civil-Service Reform League	107 00
			1882.	
			May 3.	Balance 1,558 67
				<u>\$8,177 21</u>
	Jno. C. Eno, Treasurer, in account with			
1881.	To Cash, Donation received from Hon. Orlando B. Potter	\$2,000 00	By Cash, G. P. Putnam's Sons, printing	\$1,128 96
Oct. 7.	" Other subscriptions	131 25	" for stationery	84 35
"	" For documents	4 10	" postage stamps	516 00
			" addressing and distributing documents	247 05
			" Sundries	62 36
			" Balance transferred to general fund	96 63
				<u>\$2,135 35</u>
	Jno. C. Eno, Treasurer, in account with			
	To Cash, subscriptions	\$1,225 00	" Hugh Gardner Fund."	
			By Cash, sundry bills	61 25
			" Transfer to "Curtis Prosecution Fund,"	1,100 00
			" Balance transferred to general fund	63 75
				<u>\$1,225 00</u>
	Jno. C. Eno, Treasurer, in account with			
	To Cash, transfer from Gardner Fund	\$1,100 00	" Curtis Prosecution Fund."	
			1882.	
			May 3.	By Cash, legal services 305 00
				Balance 795 00
				<u>\$1,100 00</u>
	Cash on hand.			
1882.	Balance brought forward, C.-S. R. Ass'n	\$1,558 67		
May 3.	" down "Curtis Pros'n Fund"	795 00		
		<u>\$2,353 67</u>		

JNO. C. ENO,
Treasurer.

New York, May 4, 1882.